

Language switching: Exploring writers' perceptions on the use of their L1s in the L2 writing process

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Abstract: Recent research about L2 writing indicates that L2 writers are likely to instruct themselves on how and what to do during the writing process, using both languages to do so. This constant switch between their L1 and their L2 during their L2 composing process is known as «language-switching» (L-S). The main goals in this qualitative study were two: *a)* to explore the perceptions these participants have about their L2 composing process and particularly on the use of their L1s in the L2 writing process and *b)* to depict the perceptions, understandings and tensions these participants have about their personal L2 composing process. The participants in this study were four students in an American university who completed two L2 writing tasks. Data collected included interview transcripts, think aloud protocols (TAPs), reflection sessions, videotapes, students' written texts and observations. Findings revealed that most participants were aware of the benefits that L-S brought to their L2 writing process. Their L1s helped them organize ideas, write better texts and understand the tasks given. Findings also suggest that L-S seems to be a conscious process for those who use their L2s as a second language, and an unconscious mental process for those who use their L2s as a foreign language. This study also revealed that time frame, prompts, lack of L2 proficiency, and TAPs can influence the participants' L2 writing process negatively.

Keywords: Language switching; L2 writer's perceptions; qualitative study; think aloud protocols.

Resumen: Investigaciones recientes sobre la escritura en segundas lenguas (L2) indican que los escritores de L2 constantemente se dan instrucciones sobre el cómo y el qué hacer durante el proceso de escritura, utilizando las dos lenguas a disposición. A este constante ir y venir entre la L1 y L2 durante el proceso de escritura en la L2 se conoce como «language switching» (L-S). Los principales objetivos de este estudio cualitativo fueron dos: a) explorar las percepciones que estos participantes tienen acerca de su proceso de escritura en su segunda lengua (L2) y en particular, sobre el uso de su primera lengua (L1) en el proceso de escritura en L2 y b) describir las percepciones y tensiones que estos participantes tienen de su proceso personal de escritura en su L2. Los participantes fueron cuatro estudiantes de una universidad estadounidense que completaron dos actividades de escritura en su L2. Los datos recolectados incluyen transcripciones de entrevistas, protocolos en voz alta, sesiones de reflexión, cintas de video y textos escritos de los estudiantes. Los resultados revelaron que la mayoría de los participantes estaban conscientes de los beneficios que el L-S traía a su proceso de escritura en su L2. Su L1 les ayudó a organizar las ideas, escribir y comprender mejor las tareas asignadas. Los resultados sugieren que el uso de la L1 durante la escritura en L2 parece ser un proceso consciente para aquellos que utilizan la L2 como segunda lengua, y un proceso mental inconsciente para aquellos que emplean su L2 como lengua extranjera. Este estudio también reveló que el tiempo, las asignaciones, la falta de dominio de L2, y los protocolos en voz alta pueden afectar negativamente el proceso de la escritura en L2 de los participantes.

Palabras clave: cambio de Idioma; percepciones del escritor en segundas lenguas; estudio cualitativo; protocolos en voz alta.

1. Introduction

Recent research about L2 writing indicates that L2 writers are likely to instruct themselves on how and what to do during the writing process, using both languages to do so. This constant switch between their L1 and their L2 during their L2 composing process is known as «language-switching» (L-S). The reasons for which L2 writers switch back and forth from one language to the other are vast. In an L2 writing process, writers use their L1 in order to compensate for the difficulties in the L2 (Cumming, 1989). Flower (1989) states that «writers are constantly giving themselves instructions for how to write and what to do and then monitoring how well their current effort is going» (p. 32). This mental operation, which helps in overcoming difficulties in intricate mental processes, is what Vygotsky (2002) called inner speech. This inner speech may be reflected in the writer's use of his/her L1 during L2 composing (Woodall, 2002). If L2 writers have two languages at their disposal during a cognitive process, which demands high mental operations, they are likely to language switch to their L1s when composing in their L2s as part of their personal strategies to cope with the L2 composing process.

Institutional policies or L2 teachers' assumptions, such as the exclusive and obligatory use of the L2 during the L2 composing process or the L2 classes, not only limit students' possibilities for learning but contrast with fundamental theorists such as Cummins (1996), Freeman & Freeman (1992; 1998), who advocate the fostering of the students' native languages during the L2 learning process and García and Wei (2014) who introduced the concept of translanguaging to describe the complex linguistic system bilinguals develop and use according to societally constructed and controlled 'languages' (p. 14). Kibler (2010) states that from «second and foreign language perspectives, prohibiting or restricting first language use is common practice» (p. 123). There is a common claim among educators and SLA instructors that students need to think in a L2 if they want to learn it (Leontiev, 1981). This is a recurrent scenario in some academic settings, since students are not allowed to use notes or dictionaries as tools in their L2 composing process assessment. Silva (1992) states that teachers need to be aware of and sensitive to the writers' perceptions about writing so that they can make informed decisions about curriculum. Hence, it is fundamental for us, as language teachers, to understand how L2 writers themselves perceive those language switches during their L2 composing processes and how this L1 use might influence their L2 writing processes.

2. Literature Review

A number of studies have referred to the use of the L2 writers' native language during the L2 writing process (Lay, 1982; Cumming, 1989; Friedlander, 1990; Qi, 1998; Woodall, 2002; Wang & Wen, 2002; Wang, 2003; Weijen, Bergh, Rijlaarsdam & Sanders, 2009). Some of these studies have found that L-S is closely related to the quality of the L2 texts and that the frequency of the writer's L1 use will determine the quality of the text (Lay, 1982; Friedlander, 1990; Qi, 1998; Weijen, Bergh, Rijlaarsdam & Sanders, 2009). Besides, some of these studies have also focused their attention in figuring out the purposes and patterns for which L2 writers switch to their L1s (Lay, 1982; Qi, 1998; Wang & Wen, 2002; Wang, 2003), and establishing a relationship between L1 use and L2 proficiency (Woodall, 2002; Wang & Wen, 2002; Wang, 2003). There have been some other significant studies that have enriched and contributed directly and indirectly to the understanding of the language-switching phenomenon (Roca de Larios, Murphy, and Manchón, 1999; Manchón, Roca de Larios, & Murphy, 2000; and Murphy & Roca de Larios, 2010).

All the previous research studies presented here have contributed to determining fundamental issues within the L2 writing field, and specifically in relation to the L-S topic. So far, we know that L2 writers use their L1s at any point during their L2 composing process (Lay, 1982; Cumming, 1989; Friedlander, 1990; Qi, 1998; Woodall, 2002; Wang & Wen, 2002; Wang, 2003; Weijen, Bergh, Rijlaarsdam & Sanders, 2009) and that L2 proficiency, task difficulty and level demand are related to the use and frequency of L1 in the L2 writing (Lay, 1982; Qi, 1998; Woodall, 2002; Wang & Wen, 2002; Wang, 2003). We also know that the frequency and the duration of the language switch influence the quality of the L2 texts (Lay, 1982; Friedlander, 1990; Woodall, 2002; Weijen, Bergh, Rijlaarsdam & Sanders, 2009), and that L2 writers may produce better texts if they plan in the language related to acquisition of knowledge in the topic area (Friedlander, 1990). However, while the research described above is fairly extensive and generally informative, none of the studies has focused primarily on L2 writers' perceptions on the use of their L1s in L2 writing processes. Few studies have approached writers' perceptions considering different issues such as Selami's (2010) study, which aimed to measure the perceptions of (EFL) students towards portfolio keeping; Ling and Ling's (2008) whose study aimed to explore the students' perceptions and experiences of two standardized English writing tests; and Hee-kyung's (2008) study which explored the relationship between writers' perceptions and their performance on a field-specific writing test.

Being the L2 writer one of the main actors in the composing process, attention should be given to how he/she perceives such a process and the use of the L1 in it. It was Silva (1992) who designed a classroom-based study that explored ESL graduate students' perceptions about the differences between writing in their native language and writing in English. Participants were 13 international graduate students enrolled in a writing course. Participants reported numerous and varied perceived differences regarding L1 and L2 writing processes, rhetoric and language. Especially salient were the areas of planning, writing, grammar (sentences and phrases), and vocabulary. This study can be seen as contributing to the understanding of the perceptual dimension of L2 writing and writing instruction, however, this has not been enough. More research about L2 writers' perceptions on the use of the L1 in their L2 writing process is needed. Findings will shed light on these issues and will greatly contribute in the L2 writing field.

3. Aims and Research Questions

This study is an attempt to contribute to fill gaps in the literature about L2 writers' perceptions on the L1 use and the tensions or struggles these writers face during the L2 composing process. This study aimed to explore and depict the perceptions these four participants had about their personal L2 composing process and the L1 use when composing in an L2. Writers' perceptions may bring about interesting details and insights that could not be seen from the researcher's standpoint. Considering these purposes, the main questions in this qualitative study were the following:

- a) What are these writers' perceptions about their L2 composing process and specifically on the use of their L1s in the L2 writing process?
- b) What are these writers' most common tensions during the L2 writing process?

4. The study

This study has a qualitative clinical design, meaning that data collection was approached from a qualitative perspective within a clinical setting in order to observe the participants' writing processes very closely. According to Whitmore, Martens, Goodman & Owocki (2004), in qualitative clinical studies participants «are individually engaged in experiences like Piagetian tasks...» (p. 295). As a way to complement the research done in the L2 writing field, Sasaki (2002) suggests a need for qualitative research to examine «the details of EFL writers' individual writing processes» (p. 79). In this study, I followed Woodall's (2002)

definition of Language Switching (L-S), which is defined as a «spontaneous, non-prescribed use of the L1 in L2 writing» (p. 8). The primary data collection method was a think-aloud technique while they wrote responses to two prompts. In my design, I also adapted common interpretive methods such as interviews, observations and reflective sessions.

5. Methods

5.1 Place and Participants' profiles

Data collection occurred in a small private room located in the Language Media Center of an American university (State University) and the four participants in this study, Katie, Meg, Carlos and Roberto (pseudonyms) were recruited through listserv mails within the University campus. The criteria to enroll the L2 participants for this study were basically three: a) to be an undergraduate at the university, b) to have English as a first language with speaking/reading/writing skills in Spanish or to have Spanish as a first language with speaking/reading/writing skills in English, and c) to be willing to voluntarily participate in the study. Though I neither controlled nor designed the recruitment in terms of L2 proficiency, it is my belief that both pairs of participants were not beginners as L2 learners. Katie and Meg (English as L1) were at a lower intermediate L2 proficiency level and Carlos and Roberto (Spanish as L1) were more advanced L2 learners.

a) Meg was an eighteen year-old, freshmen student from the Midwest, majoring in Spanish. Meg's first language was English and she considered herself to be a high level Spanish speaker. At college, a placement test placed her in the second intermediate level (The State University offers 5 Spanish classes: Elementary I, Elementary II, Intermediate I, Intermediate II, and Advanced Spanish). Sometimes she was immersed in a Spanish-speaking context, using Spanish to communicate with her boyfriend's Mexican relatives and listening to Spanish music such as Bachatas and Reggaeton.

b) Katie was a twenty-year old sophomore from the Midwest, majoring in English with a minor in Spanish. Katie's first language was English. Her placement test placed her in the Spanish second elementary level. Katie did not feel very confident with her Spanish proficiency, especially in writing. Although she considered herself a strong writer in her L1 and was passionate about writing, she said that writing in Spanish was harder.

c) Carlos was a twenty-one year-old senior from Costa Rica, majoring in Music. Carlos's first language was Spanish. He came to the U.S. with the

purpose of fulfilling his higher education and planned to continue his graduate studies in the U.S. Even though he learned a lot in a private English class in his hometown, he was required to take English classes in the ESL Program of the State University during his first semesters of study.

d) Roberto was a twenty-eight year old senior student from Mexico, majoring in Political Science with a minor in Spanish. Roberto's first language was Spanish. He moved with his family to the U.S. when he was six and attended a bilingual school in El Paso, Texas. Although he had lived in the U.S. most of his life, he considered Spanish to be his first language. Roberto was fully competent and fluent in both languages. However, as he did not receive any formal instruction in Spanish writing, he did not consider himself to be a strong writer in Spanish because of his lack of expertise with Spanish orthographic accents.

5.2 Writing Tasks

Each participant completed two writing tasks in their second language using a pencil or pen and a notebook. These writing tasks were intended to last no more than fifty minutes each, and participants could stop writing at any time when they felt they had finished their task. Bilingual and monolingual dictionaries were available to them. The writing tasks had different purposes and levels of difficulty.

Although, the impact of task complexity on cognitive processes have been examined and documented (Hamp-Lyons & Mathias, 1994; Skehan & Foster 1999), the decision to design different levels of complexity in the two writing tasks was based on the suggestion that more demanding tasks require more planning, more problem-solving and more opportunities «for writers to adopt a more knowledge-transforming approach» (Roca de Larios, Manchón, Murphy & Marín, 2008, p. 35) and eventually, more possibilities for language-switching (Vygotsky, 2002; Woodall, 2002; Guerrero, 2005). To reach these levels of difficulty, the prompts were designed following Bereiter & Scardamalia's (1987) study and were written in both languages. Meg and Katie were given the Spanish written prompts on the front page with the English version on the back (in case they needed to read it in their first language). Carlos and Roberto were given the English written prompts on the front page with the Spanish version on the back (in case they needed to read it in their first language). In the first task participants had to write a letter (considered an easier task) in response to a friend who had shown interest in studying for a semester at the participant's home university (Appendix A). In the second task, they had to write an argumentative essay (considered a difficult task) about their opinions regarding a widely-discussed

controversial issue in town at the time – a city government decision to limit entrance after 10 p.m. to bars and other establishments serving alcoholic beverages to those 21 years of age or older, known in the local media as the 21 Ordinance (Appendix B).

5.3 Data collection

The Think Aloud Protocol (TAP) was the main data collection tool during the writing sessions, and different ethnographic tools, such as interviews, post-writing reflective sessions, video and audio-taping, field notes, personal reflections as a researcher, participant observations, written artifacts from students and their emails were also collected. TAPs have been criticized because they are said to cause problems of validity and reliability since this technique could itself influence the way writers write by interfering with their normal composing process, slowing down people's thinking processes, or interrupting their train of thoughts (Faigley & Witte, 1981; Jääskeläinen, 2010; Polio, 2003; Wang, 2003; Woodall, 2002; Zamel, 1983). Other studies, in contrast, have evidenced the versatility and benefits of using TAPs to collect data (Hayes & Flower, 1983; Raimes, 1989; Krapels, 1990; Sasaki, 2000; Sasaki 2002). Hayes & Flower (1983) state that TAPs offer three fundamental advantages: a) they provide direct evidence about processes, b) they promote exploration due to the rich data and c) they can detect processes that are invisible to other methods.

I met with the participants individually to instruct them in the TAPs before they completed the writing tasks. I explained that a beeping sound was going to be used to remind them to keep verbalizing when they forgot to do so. After I explained the procedure of the TAPs, participants wrote a mock text about their families for ten to fifteen minutes. I made sure that they audibly verbalized and any time that they stopped verbalizing for more than 5 seconds I made a beeping sound. As I was interested in investigating the potential use of L1 during their L2 writing process and their perceptions about it, I decided not to model the TAP so as not to influence their choice of language (Manchón et al, 2000). Neither did I mention the term language switching during the first interview to avoid carry-over effects in their first writing task. During the actual TAP, a watch was used to keep the time. The whole process was audio and video-recorded. I first transferred the video clips into my personal computer and wrote corresponding notes of the significant times in my notebook in relation to the video timeline, so that it was easy for me to locate examples of significant moments (language-switches, non-verbal behaviors, inaudible voice, my failure to understand what they said, silent pauses and beeping) I wanted to discuss with each participant.

After the writing event took place, I conducted Stimulated Recall Interviews (Gas & Mackey, 2000; Uysal, 2008), or Reflective Sessions (Appendix E). I asked the participants to read and check their written text so that they could express their perceptions about the text quality and how satisfied they were with it. I usually started with the question: «How do you feel about the text you wrote?» This gave them the chance to read their written texts and reflect about them, and it also gave me the chance to set the tone for our conversation. It is worth noting here that I conducted these reflection sessions in the participant's first languages. I also invited the participant to watch and reflect on the specific moments in the video I had previously selected. The duration of these reflection sessions ranged between 29 minutes and 45 minutes. All these reflective sessions were held one day after the writing session, with the exception of Roberto, who did his first reflective session one week later due to a Thanksgiving break. I also used semi-structured interviews at the beginning (Appendix C) and at the end of the research period (Appendix D) with the purpose of obtaining information about their personal and academic lives as well as their L2 composing processes. Besides these interviews, I also met the participants one more time for member checking, that is, I shared with them my transcripts and analysis as to give them the chance to clarify, agree or disagree with the work I had done so far.

5.4 My role as a researcher

My role as a researcher was of an observer-participant. During the writing task and TAPs, my role was mainly as an observer. During those processes, I took note of every single detail that occurred while they wrote, such as: the participant's behavior, the language they were using, matching the time with any L-S instance in order to discuss it later, among others. My intention was to interfere as little as possible during their L2 writing process (except for when I had to use my beeping sound a couple of times to remind them to verbalize). During the reflection sessions and interviews I became more of a participant, since those were informal conversations intended to delve more deeply into their perceptions of the L2 writing processes. From the onset of the study, I knew I needed to build trust and rapport with the participants so I described myself to them as a person sharing similar interests as a second language user (I taught English as a Foreign Language in a Venezuelan main university for 15 years and became an L2 English user while living and completing a Ph.D. in the States for 5 years). I also asked them to call me by my first name and I called them by their preferred informal name.

5.5 Data analysis

I transcribed the interviews and reflection sessions using a denaturalized transcription style which implies the elision of idiosyncratic elements of speech such as pauses, stutters, and involuntary vocalizations (McLellan-Lemal, 2008), and the TAPs using a naturalized transcription style which captures and reflects as much detail as possible (McLellan-Lemal, 2008). I then introduced all the different pieces collected from the participants, into the Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software called Atlas.Ti in order to organize, code and categorize the participants' L-S patterns. For this initial analysis, I created two codes: L-S (language switching) and Non-L-S (non-language switching) to categorize all the writers' use of their L1. I discriminated an actual L-S from those uses of the L1 which were not considered L-S, such as when writers used their L-1 to read their native language prompt, to refer to proper names in their L1, or to read from the dictionary in their L1s. The following is an actual sample of Katie's TAP. Regular font represents when the participant spoke without writing or reading, italicized font represents reading portions to the text or the prompt (Non- L-S), bold font represents L1 use (L-S), underlined words represents participants' composing.

(01:33)... so I'm gonnna make an outline again... so I have the introduction.... um... I'm gonna have... a thesis... and I'm going to... okay... my thesis... is going to be ... um.... let's think what should my thesis be... I don't... agree with the eighteen drinking ... um... [clicking sound in her mouth]... [hhhhh.] I don't know what to say... okay...eighteen... es muy importante que: ... it's important that... alright... las personas... personas... tienen... dieciocho años no... deberían beber... porque... ellos... um... their... mind is still developing... están... develop-... no... developing... um... I'm gonna look for develop write an argumentative essay in English presenting ...

Fig. 1. Participant's actual TAP sample.

Second, I assigned a code referring to the Beeping moments to analyze whether this influenced their L1 use or not. Through the software the amount of words each writer devoted to L-S with respect to the total amount of words they used in the writing task and the total number of switches was quantified. The next step was to code the reflection sessions and interviews of the four participants. I created new codes to refer to the participants' personal perceptions about their writing experience, such as: a) L1 Use, b) Prompt, c) Think Aloud Difficulty, d) Self-Writer, e) Time Constraints, f) L2 Writing Process, g) L2 Proficiency, h)

L2 Learner, and i) Tensions. I also coded their personal interviews with codes such as a) Family, b) Hobbies, c) Educational Background, and d) Writing Habits with the purpose of organizing, analyzing and understanding their specific information regarding these topics. During this analysis, I also included other data such as the participants' L2 written texts, which I manually counted to verify the total number of words of each one of them (excluding those words that were crossed out), and my field-notes to compare and contrast them. These constant comparisons helped me organize all the of data into broader categories such as participants' personal portraits, educational and L2 backgrounds, identity as writers, perceptions about L2 writing process, L-S occurrences and use, and tensions. As this study was part of a larger scale study, a professor at the State University, the research coordinator, supervised all the transcriptions and analysis done.

6. Findings and discussion

An initial review of their TAPs in this study clearly demonstrated the spontaneous and recurrent use of these writers' L1s during their L2 composing process. All four participants used their native languages to some extent during their L2 writing processes. This confirms what previous studies have suggested, that the L2 writing process is a bilingual event (Cumming, 1989; Lay, 1982; Manchón et al, 2000; Wang & Wen, 2002; Woodall, 2002). Most of the L-S events of the four participants refer to writing-related tasks such as generating L2 content, controlling the process of writing, revising, and task examining. This has been previously studied (Lay, 1982; Qi, 1998; Wang & Wen, 2002; Wang, 2003). The frequency with which these four writers language-switched varied tremendously between the two writing tasks and among individuals. Meg and Katie language-switched more frequently than Carlos and Roberto during the two writing tasks. It is very likely that Carlos and Roberto were strongly influenced by this all-English setting as Woodall (2002) suggests. In contrast, Meg and Katie's L2 proficiency development has evolved at a much slower pace, compared with that of Carlos and Roberto, due to their few opportunities to use the L2 for authentic purposes. Research suggests that Foreign Language (FL) and Second Language (SL) writers show different writing skills development (Sasaki, 2004).

As Weijen et al (2009) suggest, L1 use during L2 writing «does not generally appear to be a writer-specific characteristic» (p. 243) as the use of their first languages differs for each individual writer in different ways for each activity. These individual differences and patterns emerged from the data analysis and can be summarized as follows: Katie's L2 writing process was entirely dominated

by her L1. In both writing tasks, the use of English, her L1, was above the 50% percentile (53% and 63% respectively) considering the total amount of words in the protocol, and the number of language-switches increased from 154 (L-S) in the first writing task to 180 (L-S) in the second. Although Meg was a proficient L2 user, results showed that she was also an L1-dependent L2 writer. However, the use of her native language never equaled 50% (39% and 24% respectively) of the total amount of words in her protocols. These percentages seem to suggest that her L1 use decreased from the first to the second L2 writing task; however, the second protocol showed that the number of words in general was higher compared with her first protocol (1,676 vs. 2,804). Likewise, the number of language-switches increased from 81 (L-S) in the first writing task to 136 (L-S) in the second. Roberto mainly conducted his L2 writing process using his L2. The use of his L1 was 2% and 1% for each writing tasks respectively. The number of language-switches decreased from 12 (L-S) in the first writing task to 6 (L-S) in the second. Carlos was the only participant who never language-switched during his first writing task. He only language-switched twice (0.5%) during his second writing task, which was not significant considering the number of words verbalized during his L2 writing process (2,477 words).

6.1 Participants' perceptions about their L2 writing

Each one of the participants in this study showed different perceptions about their particular L2 writing processes and the use of their native languages (L1s) during the L2 writing process. Personal characteristics and writing behaviors during the L2 writing process seem to have been shaped by the culture in which they experienced their native language schooling; that is to say, the strong effect that instruction has on culture. As Sasaki (2000) states «we cannot ignore the social/cultural contexts where the writing takes place» (p. 283). In establishing differences between the process of writing in the first and the second language, Grabe (2001) states that students have many implicit frames for presenting information and arguments in their L1, which cannot be transferred directly to the second or foreign language writing process. Taking a closer look at each one of the participants' insights about their L2 writing processes, in this section I synthesize the most salient features of the L2 writing process habits for these four writers.

a) Meg was aware of the composing process in general, as she emphasized the importance of devoting time to prepare the writing task in advance. It seems that she usually transferred her organizational pattern skills from her L1 to her L2 writing process. Cummins (1996) states that students who acquire literacy

skills in their L1 or L2 usually develop a deeper conceptual and linguistic proficiency that he calls «common underlying proficiency» which helps them transfer cognitive or literacy skills from one language to the other. He developed the threshold hypothesis, which stated that a minimum threshold in language proficiency must be reached before a second-language speaker can obtain any benefits from language (Cummins, 1976). L2 writers transfer L1 skills and strategies to approach the L2 process of writing and these transfers play a central role in L2 writing (Jones & Tetroe, 1987; Friedlander, 1990; Kobayashi & Rinnert, 1992). As part of this expertise from her L1, Meg was aware of her need to plan her writing by using outlines. As she herself commented, «I'm an outline kind of person, I can't start just from nowhere, I have to... like have a basic idea». She devoted more time to planning when the level of difficulty in her writing task increased. In the first writing task, her planning took no more than 2 minutes out of 33 total minutes; whereas in the argumentative essay, she spent almost a third of the composing time planning before starting her text. As Qi (1998) suggests, this finding might indicate that Meg «needed to think at a deeper level before she could communicate her ideas clearly» during her second writing task (p. 422). When writing, she seemed to follow her outlines and did not revise the entire text after she finished writing her letter. About her two L2 written texts, she said she did not feel satisfied with the first written text because her Spanish was very basic, «I am not very satisfied with it but, 'cause I don't feel my verbs were very high level and it was just very basic like...» However, she felt fine with the second written text. She believed her argumentative essay had a higher complexity. «I think it's more complete; my thoughts are more complete and I think it is at a higher level maybe...»

b) Katie was also an outline-oriented L2 writer and considered planning a fundamental stage in her L2 writing process, «Well I usually start with an outline...» She devoted a significant amount of time brainstorming and planning (23%) and this seems to be a recurrent pattern, as she did this in both writing tasks. Jones & Tetroe (1987) state that «the quality of planning transfers from L1 to L2» (p. 56) and Cumming (1989) suggests that writing behavior and «planning» in particular could be socially constrained. Katie seems to have brought some of her L1 writing skills to her L2 writing, such as her planning and revising skills, as well as her overall expertise in terms of content, as Jones & Tetroe (1987) suggest. Katie was also aware of the importance of elaborating a thesis statement. «I need a thesis, 'cause every time I write, even in Spanish, I always have a thesis to write about...» As she has commented, she perceived

herself as a well-rounded writer in her L1; however, she did not perceive herself as a good writer in her L2. «I feel I am not a very strong writer...»

c) In contrast, Carlos did not consider himself a writer. His definition of a writer is broader. As he put it, «the truth is that as a writer I don't consider myself as somebody who likes to put my thoughts on paper. I don't envision myself as a person who could make a living by writing my own thoughts.» However, Carlos was conscious that his L2 writing was rather sophisticated. He perceived that writing in English was different than writing in Spanish since in English there are more clues to organize the writing «I think English writing organization is pretty good because if you have a thesis statement, that helps you know what you want to write about...» Carlos's writing pattern involved planning short outlines and writing long texts. Carlos wrote longer texts than his counterparts; he said that this length did not surprise him at all as that was a very common characteristic in his writing, «I think they ((L1) English writers) tend to write a bit less. When I write, I always end up writing a lot.» Carlos devoted little time to planning his two written L2 texts (2 minutes out of 43 minutes and 5 minutes out of 55 minutes respectively). In addition, he admitted openly he did not like to spend too much time writing outlines, as he was not used to it. «I don't like writing outlines. I almost never do them. I usually plan them in my mind and pick some ideas, only ideas in my plan. I seldom like, write a long plan.» These two characteristics, writing brief outlines and long texts, could be understood as Carlos's personal strategies for writing in L2, but also could be assumed as a culture-specific aspect as Cumming (1989) suggests.

d) Roberto said he was the kind of writer that takes his time to read and collect information before writing a paper. In neither task did Roberto jot ideas or elaborate an outline. It seemed as if he generated his ideas as he wrote. «I only realized that I usually write what I'm thinking and at the same time I go back and check what I've been writing and try to correct...» There was an absence of outlines or written plans in his L2 composing process to help him organize his ideas, which contrasts with the previous participants in this study. «Most of the times I just start writing, no outline at all. When I'm writing in English I think it takes more time to visualize my ideas...» Roberto barely took two minutes to read the prompt and start his writing. Roberto suggested that he also has problems in writing in Spanish, «As I didn't go to school in Mexico and my language... but I do speak Spanish, but when I have to write in Spanish, I find it hard when... because of the accents, but in English I don't...»

Both Meg and Katie showed these particular processes (planning-formulation-revising) in their L2 composing which might contrast with the

Carlos and Roberto's. The need for outlines as well as thesis statements was fundamental in Meg and Katie's L2 writing processes, which could have been shaped by the schooling experiences in their particular cultures. Although Contrastive Rhetoric (Kaplan, 1966) has been criticized, it can be still claimed that culture shape the writers' writing patterns. Spanish speakers/writers are thought to compose long L2 texts influenced by the way they write in their first language, and this seems to be true in Carlos and Roberto's cases. Carlos's letter had 664 words, which was twice as many as Meg's letter (318 words) and almost three times more than Katie's letter (242 words). His second written text was also long; he wrote a seven-paragraph essay of about 700 words, which was twice as many words as Meg's (354 words) and Katie's (357 words) argumentative essays. On the other hand, Roberto wrote a five-paragraph letter of about 357 words and a four-paragraph essay of 479 words. His L2 written texts were not as long as Carlos's but were still longer than those of Meg and Katie. Based on the count of words in their L2 written texts, Carlos and Roberto wrote more in their L2 than their English speakers counterparts. However, due to the number of participants in this study, this finding could not be considered as conclusive. Besides, this difference might be also explained by the different participants' L2 proficiency. It is worth noting here that this finding refers solely to the length of the written texts and not to the quality of them.

The following Table 1 is a comparative chart of the four participants in which I summarize their L2 writing behaviors in terms of outlines, planning time and length of written texts:

Table 1. Comparative chart of participants' L2 writing behaviors.

Participants	Use of outlines	Approximate planning time in percentages for the letter and the essay respectively		Number of words in letter	Number of words in argumentative essay
Meg	Yes	6 %	33%	318 words	354 words
Katie	Yes	23%	23%	242 words	357 words
Carlos	Yes	4%	9%	664 words	700 words
Roberto	No	6%	4%	357 words	479 words

Jones & Tetroe (1987) state that second language writers «must deal not only with the usual problems of composing, but also with the problems of doing so in a language in which they are not as competent as they are in their first» (p. 34), and Manchón et al (2000) state that L2 writers have to pay attention to various lower and higher level text demands during the L2 writing process. During this qualitative clinical study, the four writers reflected on their L1 use and certain tensions they faced during their L2 writing processes.

6.2. Writers' perceptions about their L1 use and tensions about time, prompts, TAPs and beeping during their L2 writing

a) Meg's perceptions:

Meg thought that L-S was a very common strategy for writers during L2 writing and was aware of the advantages that L-S brought to her L2 writing process. She realized that L-S is a benefit to her since it helped check her intentions during the L2 writing process, «I mean it's nice to have a language to like... another language to verify the language you are writing in...» Then she added, «... it really helps me organize I guess it really makes me see things clear, more clear because it's my native language. I don't think it's more practical for organizing, I just think it really helps that I have... that I can like also look back to my native language and like see how the organization makes sense to me in my own language.» Meg also commented that most of her switches were done unconsciously. «I think 'cause it's just my first language and I was like... I just didn't even think about like saying it. I just kind of said it, I didn't realize I was saying it, it is just my first language...»

For Meg, the time given to complete the writing tasks affected her L2 writing process since she had to prepare the outline and the writing at the same time. «The hardest part was probably... I guess just 'cause I'm used to... with my Spanish writing class... having a night to prepare an outline and then writing it. The next day I know exactly what I'm going to write about...» She also commented that she found the topic a bit confusing at first and also suggested that the English prompt strongly influenced her to use her L1 as it was available in her L1. Meg faced some difficulties related to the TAP. Although Jones & Tetroe (1987) state that verbal protocols do not, in general, affect writing, Meg suggested that thinking out loud while writing was novel for her, and that her writing would have been better organized and her Spanish more sophisticated if she had not had to verbalize. However, Meg recognized that she would potentially use the technique when she makes mistakes, «... I don't really think aloud... unless I make a mistake or something when I say 'oh my gosh' or something... then I think I'll say that aloud.» As the L2 writing process is a problem-solving phenomenon (Flower, 1989; Roca de Larios, Manchón, Murphy & Marín, 2008) in which miscues constantly emerge as ideas are generated and texts are written, revised and edited, it seems likely that Meg does, in fact, think aloud in her daily writing. Meg said she instinctively switched to English when she heard the beep, «I was surprised...when I get in my writing mode I obviously... I just write and write and write and then like... I just like heard the beep and wow I went like

that... and so like my first intuition... oh like... I need to... I don't know... use English...» I must assume that this beeping was an external influence on her L-S behavior.

b) Katie's perceptions:

Katie's pattern was to use her L1 along her whole L2 writing process, as her main tool to cope with her lack of L2 proficiency and she strongly believed her native language helped her organize her ideas in the text, «I think it helps me out to put my sentences together...» She perceived that it made her write a better paper in her L2. «I feel that I can construct a better Spanish essay if I thought about it in English...» Katie also said the L1 use helped her comprehend the text and the task more fully when she was hesitant. «Probably it would be more sure if I use English so I can say it in English and comprehend it at a stronger level that I would in Spanish, not all the time, maybe just during the times where I'm not one hundred percent sure on what I'm saying». At first, the habit of L-S was an unconscious process for Katie, «I'm going back and forth, I'd never realized it until you said something afterwards...» As she reflected more on her tendency to language switch back and forth from Spanish to English during her L2 writing, she commented, «I think I do that to double-check, to make sure that what I'm writing makes sense in my head. I'm thinking that if it makes sense in English it will make sense in Spanish, when I translate it from English to Spanish. I think I do this to make sure my sentence structure is correct and word choice is right...» Katie was aware of the fact that she language-switched more during the second writing activity, «I think I spoke more English in this one, to make sure it sounded... what do I wanna say... sounded up to standard, is that what I wanna say... so it sounded formal...»

Katie saw L2 writing within a process-oriented approach and said she was used to preparing herself in advance to get engaged in any writing process; hence, she was also affected by time constraints. She said that it was difficult to prepare an outline and write the text in fifty minutes, which corresponds to the usual academic hour at the State University. «I felt a little rushed at the end yeah, but... I mean I could've said more but then I just ended it. Apparently I needed more time to talk about it, or like a writing assignment in my writing Spanish class... it usually takes me the whole fifty minutes...» Katie suggested that her lack of L2 proficiency made her L2 writing process slower, less fluent and more simplistic as compared to her L1 writing process. She said she found it hard to generate L2 content due to her lack of vocabulary. «The hardest... I don't know, sort of... sometimes I have trouble with vocabulary like when I don't know a word». Katie also suggested that the use of the think aloud technique might have affected her

in different ways. She said that because she was not used to doing that and that speaking aloud in her L2 represented a big challenge to her because that process occurred concurrent with the need to monitor her L2 accuracy, all of which slowed down her thinking process. In addition, Katie thought that monitoring her L2 output usually took her away from the assignment, «I remember when I was writing that I had to think through the verbs and conjugations and the adjectives before and after the noun and stuff like that and so kind of takes away from the actual assignment of writing like I have in English 'cause it comes natural compared to Spanish».

It is worth noting here that Meg as well as Katie themselves commented that at first their L-S was an unconscious process. They had not realized they were using their L1s until we watched the video during the reflection session and discussed about it.

c) Carlos's perceptions:

Carlos was conscious that his L2 writing was rather sophisticated, and he was also aware that he did not language switch often during his L2 composing process. «I realized that when I'm writing in English now I almost never think in Spanish like I did during my first year when I was learning English...» Although he did not use his L1 much during his L2 writing process, he indirectly accepted the benefits of L-S during L2 composing, «Sometimes... sometimes I feel like... sometimes I think how could I say this in Spanish, when it's hard for me to say it in English but... but it's... I don't use it much...» This also means that Carlos is aware on the use of his L1 during his L2 writing process. Carlos also commented that he was affected by time constraints during the second writing task. He thought that if he had had more time, his writing would have been of higher quality. Carlos's perception of the use of the TAP changed from the first writing task to the second. He said that during his first writing task he was not affected by the think aloud technique; however, during the second writing task, he felt the technique affected his composing process negatively, «The first one was really easy and I felt that speaking aloud helped me...» Then he said, «Well, that... because I needed to be constantly... like speaking... I didn't allow my brain to have that kind of break, that kind of space that it needs, for me to kind of like... focus on an idea and kind of write it down... so it interrupted me, yeah in a way it did, in this one yeah, in the first one I didn't have the problem, but in this one like I felt that my brain didn't have that space that it needs... for me to kind of like focus on an idea and kind of write it down...»

d) Roberto's perceptions:

Roberto perceived that thinking in Spanish during any L2 writing task was a natural and regular practice for him. «It is something natural. I speak Spanish and that's why I use it...» He confessed that he used this particular technique anytime when he felt he was stuck when using his L2. «... If I feel I'm stuck thinking in English then I switch and think in Spanish and then I translate it to English. Most of the times it works but I sometimes use Spanglish...» Roberto was aware and conscious of his L-S habits and commented on his personal pattern of L-S: «When I felt stuck and didn't know what to write I realized my voice started to lower and then I asked myself to wait, it's like... like my personal way to switch from English to Spanish». It is interesting the fact that unlike Meg and Katie, Roberto is quite aware of his L1 use and the potential benefits of it. Roberto thought the use of his L1 during his L2 writing process was beneficial for him. He strongly believed that he needed to language switch during his L2 writing process, and depending on the familiarity of the topic; the frequency of his language switches would vary. Roberto's perceptions seem to indicate a close connection between the frequency of L-S and the degree of familiarity with the topic; that is, the more familiar the writer is with the topic, the less he language-switches.

Roberto had been raised in a bilingual community since the age of six, which made him a very competent speaker in both languages. However, at the same time, he thought that his lack of academic experience in Spanish had jeopardized his status as a writer in his native language, especially in regard to Spanish accents. Roberto also faced some difficulties related to the first prompt. The prompt corresponding to the first L2 writing task (a letter in response to a friend who had shown interest in studying for a semester at the participant's home university) did not reflect Roberto's particular experience since he cannot be considered an international student like Carlos, but he is a legal resident of the United States. He did not live in the local community, nor had he ever lived in or studied in Mexico. One of Roberto's L-S episodes occurred as he was trying to solve this problem, «I think the most difficult was to explain the benefits of studying here. I don't live here* (*the city where the State University is located)...» Roberto also commented that the TAP helped him focus in some cases; however, he said that it was difficult at times. «Sometimes your thoughts come faster than your writing and that gave me a hard time by having to write and speak aloud at the same time».

From these participants' perceptions, it seems that the use of their L1s was beneficial for them during their L2 writing processes. Their L1s helped them

organize ideas, write better texts and understand the tasks given. Katie, Meg and Roberto openly acknowledged the benefits of the L1 use during their L2 writing processes and although Carlos did not expressly say that, he suggested that the L1 use could help him overcome certain problems during his L2 writing. It is interesting to point out here one of the most salient findings so far is the conscious/unconscious use of the L1 during the L2 composing process. As for Meg and Katie, L-S seems to be an unconscious mental process at some point, whereas for Carlos and Roberto, language switching appears to be a conscious process. It is very likely that Carlos and Roberto were strongly influenced by this all-English setting as Woodall (2002) suggests. Research suggests that Foreign Language (FL) and Second Language (SL) writers show different writing skills development (Sasaki, 2004). According to Woodall (2002) L-S frequency is related to L2 proficiency; therefore, if language switching is closely related to L2 proficiency, and L2 proficiency is related to the situational context where L2 learners learn and use their L2, then the SL and FL contexts are also essential to consider in language-switching studies. This finding might suggest that writers, like Carlos and Roberto, using their L2 as a second language seemed to control their L-S, while others, like Meg and Katie, using their L2 as a foreign language, seem to use their L1s unconsciously. Although they all used their L1s for problem-solving purposes, Carlos and Roberto seem to decide when to use it or not whereas Meg and Katie were not aware of its use.

The fact of living and using their L2 on a daily basis offers Carlos and Roberto the chance to develop their L2 proficiency at a faster pace and gives them the ability to control (consciously use) their L1s. The use and control of these participants' L1s during the L2 writing process can be seen from the translanguaging theory which is defined as a «hybrid practice of languaging bilingually» (García, 2011, p. 33). This author states that a bilingual person translanguages to mediate understanding and to co-construct and construct meaning. In an attempt to construct meaning during the L2 writing process, Carlos and Roberto may have the ability to decide consciously when to use the L1. Velasco & García (2014) propose translanguaging in writing as a self-regulating mechanism in which bilingual students can engage. García & Wei (2014) define translanguaging as a dynamic bilingualism which goes beyond the idea that the language practice of bilinguals are complex and interrelated: they do not emerge in a linear way or function separately since there is one linguistic system» (p. 14). On the other hand, it is possible that Meg and Katie may have been challenged by the L2 writing task and as their L2 proficiency is not as high as Carlos and Roberto's due to the situational context, the use of their L1s arises as an automatic way to

overcome difficulties in intricate mental processes. This mental operation is what Vygotsky (2002) called inner speech.

The following Table 2 is a comparative chart in which I summarize the four participants' perceptions on their L1 use and their tensions about time, prompts, TAPs and Beeping during their participation in this study.

Table 2. Comparative chart of participants' perceptions and tensions related to the L2 writing process.

Perceptions Tensions Participants	Perceptions on L1 use	Tension: Time constraints	Tension: Prompts	Tension: Think aloud use	Tension: Beeping
Meg	Unconscious process. She needed to use her L1 often	She suggested she was affected by time	Confusing topic	Negative and positive sides	Surprised her
Katie	Unconscious process. She needed to use her L1 often	She suggested she was affected by time	None	Took her from task	None
Carlos	Conscious process.	He suggested he was affected by time	None	Negative and positive sides	None
Roberto	Conscious process.	None	Topic was not appropriate for him	Negative and positive sides	None

6.3 Summary of Findings

Due to the nature of this study design, which involves four participants, findings could not be considered as conclusive. From this study we can suggest that the L2 composing process is a bilingual event (Woodall, 2002) in which L-S has a natural occurrence. It seems that more proficient L2 users language-switch less frequently than the less proficient counterparts. Regarding the students' L2 writing habits, this study suggests that writers transfer their L1 skills to the L2 writing process (Cumming, 1989; Jones & Tetroe, 1987; Friedlander, 1990; Kobayashi & Rinnert, 1992). Both Meg and Katie demonstrated processes involving planning-formulation and revising in their L2 composing, which might contrast with Carlos and Roberto's L2 writing processes. The English (first language) users were outline-oriented and used thesis statements to organize their writing, whereas the Spanish (first language) users did not depend on outlines nor plan much for their writing. These data also suggest that the Spanish (first language) speakers wrote more in their L2 than the English (first language) speakers. All these characteristics seem to be part of the writers' cultural writing behaviors and have been shaped by their schooling experiences. However, as I pointed out before, this finding could not be considered as conclusive due to the number of participants in this study. It is not clear though whether these characteristics are exclusively related to their L2 academic writing, or to their

general L2 writing. Also, if culture is mediated by instruction and Roberto has experienced his entire schooling in the U.S., how is it that he is not an outline-oriented writer? It is possible that his L2 writing behaviors have been shaped not only by his schooling experience, but also by his Spanish-speaking environment. There is also a possibility that the writers' L2 proficiency or their gender may play a role in these differences given that Carlos and Roberto were males and Meg and Katie were females.

One of the greatest contributions of this study to the L-S field is the participants' perceptions about their L-S habits. Considering not only the researcher's point of view but also the participants' perceptions help us see the L-S phenomenon from a different lens. Three out of four participants thought that L-S was a very common strategy for writers during L2 writing and they were aware of the benefits that L-S brought to their L2 writing processes. Their L1s helped them organize ideas, write better texts and understand the tasks given. Findings suggest that L-S seems to be a conscious process for those who use their L2s as a second language, and an unconscious mental process for those who use their L2s as a foreign language. That is to say, Carlos and Roberto seemed to control their L-Ss, while Meg and Katie, seemed to use their L1s unconsciously while writing in L2. This particular finding deserves a deeper study. The study also reveals that these L2 writers believed that time was an important issue that influenced their writing negatively. They suggested a need for more time to plan and write their texts. Although Carlos commented on certain positive aspects of the use of the think-aloud technique, its use also negatively affected their writing performances.

7. Limitations of the Study

There were certain uncontrolled aspects during the data collection process that could be considered as limitations. A possible limitation is the different writing schedules set for the 4 participants. In fact, the length of time in between the writing activity and the reflection session was not uniform with all the participants. The time period between the two writing tasks and their reflection sessions was first intended to be one week due to the crucial influence time has on language development proficiency and the participants' ability to remember what they did during the L2 writing tasks. Though I tried hard to set the writing activities and reflection sessions within a short period of time as suggested by Bloom (1954), it was not possible to do so with all of the participants due to Carlos's hectic schedule, and a Thanksgiving break which came between Roberto's first writing activity and his first reflection session. Another limitation could be that both

writing tasks were designed to be accomplished during a limited time, and this may have affected the composing process as Wang & Wen (2002) suggest. In addition, participants' written texts must be considered first drafts. Therefore, future research in this area should consider the possibility of studying the L-S phenomenon using a several draft L2 process. This would allow for exploration into whether L-S varies during the entire L2 writing process, and would also give writers a longer time frame that would allow them to feel comfortable in planning and composing their texts without feeling rushed. One last limitation could be the influence my presence might have caused on their use of L1 or L2 during the L2 composing process as I had to use my beeping sound a couple of times to remind them to verbalize.

8. Pedagogical and Research Implications

In a broader sense, this study can be seen as contributing to the understanding of the perceptual dimensions of the L2 writing field. From these participants' perceptions, it is evident that the use of their L1s was beneficial in their L2 composing process, so teachers need to be aware of these benefits to make informed decisions in their teaching practice. What does it mean for a second language educator to be aware of second language writers' needs as they use their native language in their L2 writing? As L2 writing teachers, we need to give students the freedom to use all the resources they have during the L2 writing process, including the students' L1s. Using the students' first language during the L2 writing process does not necessarily mean composing aloud. Writing does not necessarily mean a silent process either. In this latter case, when writers verbalize their thoughts and use their L1s to scaffold their L2 composing process, teachers need to be sensitive to the writers' needs and encourage them to use their L1s as needed.

More research about the use of students' L1s during L2 writing needs to be done. There are still huge gaps to fill in order to fully understand the complex cognitive processes in students' minds during L2 composing and their relationships with the L-S phenomenon. Something interesting, and as yet unexplored in the findings of this study are those related to the conscious/unconscious use of the L1 in connection with FL or SL settings. This issue might open doors to new research on this particular case.

Final Considerations

Due to the nature of the qualitative sample size, the patterns found in this study cannot be claimed to be the cultural representations of English or Spanish writing. My purpose was, by no means, to draw general conclusions or hypotheses of the L-S phenomenon during the L2 writing process but to shed light on certain aspects of this complex writing process so as to reveal the writers' perceptions and understandings of their L2 writing process and the use of their native languages in their L2 writing process. Hence, these findings could not be rigorously evaluated but could be taken as an opportunity for future research to compare, verify and dig deeper into these and other fundamental topics related to L-S. It is my hope that findings in this study may encourage language teachers to revisit their assumptions about the most appropriate ways to help SL/FL students develop their L2 by understanding the need to use their L1s as a resource for learning the L2 [See Cummins (1996); García & Wei (2014); Schwarzer (2001)]. As Woodall (2002) suggests, L2 writing instructors need to find ways to incorporate this L-S strategy into their teaching practice.

Appendix A:

Letter. Task # 1 (For speakers of Spanish as L1)

An American friend you recently met during your vacation in the Southern part of the United States is interested in studying a semester in a university in your home country. Write a letter in English telling your friend about life in your country. Describe the city, the weather, transportation, night-life, the university facilities (campus, resources, and accommodations) and tell him/her about your personal experience (or one of your friend) while studying there. Include any piece of information you think will be useful for your friend.

Carta. Task # 1 (For speakers of English as L1)

Un amigo a quien conociste durante tu viaje a Latinoamérica está interesado en estudiar un semestre en los Estados Unidos. Escríbele una carta en español comentándole sobre la vida en tu país, la ciudad donde está la universidad, la infraestructura de la universidad y sus recursos (campus, residencias, carreras, clases, etc.), el tiempo, el transporte, la vida estudiantil y la vida nocturna. Describe tu experiencia personal en esa universidad (o la de algún amigo). Incluye cualquier información que consideres sea necesaria.

Appendix B:

Argumentative essay. Task # 2 (For speakers of Spanish as L1)

The editor of the «Daily Citizen» initiates a new section in the newspaper encouraging students to give their opinions about public issues in the city. The topic for this week states: «Should the legal drinking age be reduced to 18 in the city bars, or should it remain 21». Write an argumentative essay in English presenting pros and cons of each side of the argument. State your position on this topic and explain your reasons.

Ensayo Argumentativo. Task # 2 (For speakers of English as L1)

El editor del periódico «Daily Citizen» abrió una nueva sección internacional alentando a los estudiantes de la State University a emitir sus opiniones en español sobre temas de interés público. El tema de esta semana es: «Se debería reducir a 18 años la edad legal para consumir alcohol en los bares de la ciudad, o debería permanecer en 21 años de edad». Escriba un ensayo argumentativo en español presentando los pros y los contras de cada posición. Fija tu posición personal y explica tus razones.

Appendix C: Initial interview (conducted in the informant's L1)

1. What is your academic background? (Cuál es tu bagaje académico?)
2. What are you studying now? (Que estás estudiando ahora?)
3. What would you like to be as a professional? (Qué profesión te gustaría obtener?)
4. How long have you been studying Spanish as a second language? (Hace cuanto tiempo has estado estudiando inglés?)
5. Tell me about your previous experience with writing. (Comenta sobre tu experiencia con la escritura)
6. How often do you write? (Con que frecuencia escribes?)
7. What kind of writing do you usually do? (Qué tipo de escritura haces regularmente?)
8. How do you think writing in a second language is different from writing in your native language? Why? (Consideras que escribir en tu lengua materna es diferente a escribir en tu segunda lengua? Por qué?)
9. What do you think is the most difficult and the easiest task during a second language writing activity? (Qué consideras que es lo mas fácil y lo más difícil en la escritura en la segunda lengua?)

10. How do you approach a writing task in your L1? (Cómo organizas tu escritura en tu lengua maternal?)
11. How do you approach an L2 writing task? (Cómo organizas tu escritura en tu segunda lengua?)

Appendix D: Final interview (conducted in the informant's L1)

1. What did you learn during this writing experience? (Qué aprendiste de esta experiencia de escritura?)
2. How was this writing experience for you? (Cómo te pareció la experiencia?)
3. What do you think about the use of L1 in L2 writing? (Qué opinas del uso de la lengua materna durante la escritura de la segunda lengua?)
4. What surprised you during this writing experience? (Qué te sorprendió de esta experiencia?)
5. How different is your perception of second language writing compared with your perception at the beginning of the study? (Qué tan diferente es tu opinión de la escritura en la segunda lengua comparada con tu opinión al comienzo de este estudio?)
6. Have your L2 habits changed during this project? (Han cambiado tus hábitos de escritura en tu segunda lengua durante este estudio?)
7. Have you realized any particular writing pattern? (Has percibido algún patrón de escritura?)

Appendix E: Post-writing reflection interview

1. How do you feel about your written text? (Cómo te siente con tu texto escrito?)
2. What did you notice about your composing process in your second language? (Qué percibes de tu proceso de escritura en tu segunda lengua?)
3. Did you realize any particular pattern in your composing process? (Percibiste algún patrón en particular en tu proceso de escritura?)
4. What was the hardest (easiest) part in the previous L2 writing task? (Qué fue lo mas fácil/difícil en la actividad de escritura anterior?)
5. How has this writing task been different from any others you have done previously? (Encuentras alguna diferencia entre esta actividad de escritura y otras que hayas realizado anteriormente?)
6. Were you aware of any particular approach you were taking to complete the writing task? (Estás consciente de algún enfoque particular que usaste para completar esta actividad de escritura?)

7. Did you realize if you use more than one language when you were composing? (Notaste si usaste mas de una lengua cuando escribías?)
8. If you do, how do you feel using you L1 during your L2 composing process? (Si lo notaste, como te sientes al usar tu lengua materna cuando escribes en tu segunda lengua?)
9. Why do you think you used one (or two) language(s) during your composing? (Por qué consideras que utilizaste una (o dos) lenguas durante tu escritura?)
10. When are you more likely to think in your native/second language during your second language writing? (Cuando es más probable que utilices tu lengua maternal durante tu escritura en l;a segunda lengua?)
11. What were you thinking in this specific moment? (referring to a specific section on the video recording). (Qué estabas pensando en este momento?)
12. What can you tell me about your written text? (Qué me puedes decir sobre tu texto escrito?)

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